

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 073963
ORIGIN ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 H-02 SAB-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00
SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /056 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/PAN:JCHAAHR:ZC
APPROVED BY ARA/PAN:JCHAAHR
H:JSIMMS (SUBS.)
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE

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FOR THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PEPR, PN

SUBJECT: CHURCH STATEMENT

1. YOU WILL BE INTERESTED IN THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT BY
SENATOR CHURCH CONCERNING U.S./PANAMANIAN FRIENDSHIP MADE
DURING THE DEBATE (CONGRESSIONAL RECORD FOR MARCH 20,
PAGE S 4081):

2. BEGIN QUOTE I WOULD JUST LIKE TO SAY ONE OTHER THING,
WITH THE SENATOR'S INDULGENCE. I WISH WE WOULD BE MINDFUL
THAT THIS DEBATE IS BEING CARRIED IN PANAMA FROM GAVEL TO
GAVEL, TRANSLATED SIMULTANEOUSLY INTO SPANISH.

3. EVERYTHING WE SAY ON THIS FLOOR IS BEING BROADCAST NOT
ONLY TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE THROUGH PUBLIC RADIO, BUT ALSO
TO THE PEOPLE OF PANAMA AS WELL.

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4. I, FOR ONE, WISH THEM TO KNOW IN PANAMA THAT THERE ARE
AMERICANS WHO APPRECIATE THE LONG, THE FAITHFUL FRIENDSHIP
THAT PANAMANIAN PEOPLE HAVE SHOWN TOWARD THE UNITED STATES
FOR THE PAST 75 YEARS.

5. I, FOR ONE, WANT THEM TO KNOW THAT THERE ARE AMERICANS,

AND I BELIEVE THEM TO BE IN THE GREAT MAJORITY, WHO APPRECIATE THE FACT THAT PANAMA STOOD BY US AS AN ALLY OF THE UNITED STATES IN BOTH WORLD WARS OF THIS CENTURY. INDEED, IF MY INFORMATION IS CORRECT, THE PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT, FOLLOWING PEARL HARBOR, ACTUALLY DECLARED WAR AGAINST JAPAN BEFORE THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES DID.

6. WHEN I HEAR SOME OF THE DEPRECIATING ARGUMENTS DIRECTED TOWARD PANAMA AND THE PANAMANIAN, I THINK WE OUGHT TO REMIND OURSELVES OF THAT LONG PERIOD OF FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THIS SMALL COUNTRY, PANAMA, AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

7. IT IS TO PRESERVE THE BASIS FOR THAT FRIENDSHIP THAT WE HAVE THIS TREATY NOW BEFORE US. TO DO RIGHT BY THE PEOPLE OF PANAMA WILL ENABLE US TO PRESERVE THAT CLOSE AND FRIENDLY TIE IN THE FUTURE.

8. MR. PRESIDENT, NOTHING COULD BE MORE INJURIOUS TO SUCH AN OBJECTIVE THAN TO ADOPT THE AMENDMENT OFFERED BY THE SENATOR FROM KANSAS. IT SUGGESTS THAT WE HAVE NO MEMORY THAT 75 YEARS OF FIDELITY MEAN NOTHING TO US.

9. THE SENATOR FROM KANSAS SAYS, "OH, BUT LOOK, THE RUSSIANS ARE IN ETHIOPIA." WELL, MR. PRESIDENT, WHATEVER THAT MAY HAVE TO DO WITH PANAMA, IT IS AT LEAST USEFUL TO

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REMEMBER THAT THE RUSSIANS DID NOT ENTER ETHIOPIA UNTIL AFTER THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT INVITED US OUT. IT WAS ONLY AFTER A COMPLETE BREAKDOWN IN OUR FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH ETHIOPIA, THAT THE RUSSIANS MOVED IN.

10. I DO NOT WANT TO SEE THE CLOSE TIES, THE FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND PANAMA JEOPARDIZED, BECAUSE THAT IS WHAT HAS KEPT HOSTILE FORCES OUT OF THE ISTHMUS ALL THESE YEARS. IT IS A RELATIONSHIP TO BE PRESERVED, AND IT IS THE BASIS FOR KEEPING FOREIGN TROOPS AWAY FROM THE CANAL IN THE FUTURE.

11. I MUST SAY IT IS A MATTER FAR MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE SIZE OF OUR ARMED FORCES OR THE NUMBERS OF WEAPONS THAT WE CONCENTRATE ON THE ISTHMUS TO PROTECT THE CANAL IF THE ATTITUDE OF THE PANAMANIAN PEOPLE WERE TO TURN AGAINST US, AN ENVIRONMENT OF HOSTILITY AND VIOLENCE WERE TO REPLACE THE PRESENT PEACEFUL RELATIONSHIP THAT EXIST BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. END QUOTE VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AMITY, US CONGRESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS, SPEECHES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE073963
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JCHAAHR:ZC
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780126-1020
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780336/aaaabeek.tel
Line Count: 113
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 80531fbf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3235315
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CHURCH STATEMENT
TAGS: PEPR, PGOV, PN, (CHURCH, FRANK)
To: PANAMA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/80531fbf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014